

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 LONDON 08661 101757Z

73

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAJ-01 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 DRC-01

/120 W

----- 073227

R 101748Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1976

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LONDON 08661

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UK, PINT

SUBJECT: LABOR MP DEFECTS TO LIBERALS

1. SUMMARY - THE DEFECTION OF A LABOR MP TO THE LIBERALS AND THE PUBLICATION OF AN OPINION POLL SHOWING AN INCREASE IN LIBERAL SUPPORT HAVE GIVEN NEW CREDIBILITY TO LIBERAL DEMANDS FOR A COALITION GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY

2. CHRISTOPHER MAYHEW, LABOR MP AND FORMER LABOR MINISTER, CONFIRMED YESTERDAY (JULY 9) THAT HE WAS LEAVING THE LABOR PARTY AND WOULD BE TAKING THE LIBERAL WHIP. HIS DEFECTION REDUCES LABOR'S PARLIAMENTARY MARGIN OVER THE CONSERVATIVES TO THREE (298 TO 295) AND SWELLS THE RANKS OF LIBERAL MPS TO FIFTEEN.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 LONDON 08661 101757Z

3. MAYHEW IS A STRONG PRO-MARKETEER (ONE OF THE 69 LABOR MPS WHO DEFIED THEIR WHIPS TO VOTE FOR EC ENTRY IN OCTOBER 1971), AND AN OUTSPOKEN SUPPORTER OF THE ARAB CAUSE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE HAS BEEN AT ODDS WITH HAROLD WILSON ON MANY ISSUES EVER SINCE 1966 WHEN HE RESIGNED AS MINISTER FOR THE NAVY IN A DISPUTE OVER DEFENSE POLICY.

4. IN A STATEMENT ISSUED YESTERDAY TO EXPLAIN HIS RESIGNATION FROM THE LABOR PARTY AFTER 28 YEARS' SERVICE AS A LABOR MP, MAYHEW CHARGED THAT THE PARTY HAD BECOME "TOO VULNERABLE TO THE EXTREME LEFT AND TOO DEPENDENT ON THE UNIONS." HE CAME OUT IN FAVOR OF AN ALL-PARTY GOVERNMENT AND TO THIS END URGED THE ELECTORATE TO VOTE LIBERAL AT THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION.

5. COMMENT: MAYHEW IS A MAVERICK. ALTHOUGH OTHERS IN THE PARLIAMENTARY LABOR PARTY MAY SYMPATHIZE WITH HIS MISGIVINGS ABOUT THE DIRECTION IN WHICH THE PARTY HAS MOVED IN RECENT YEARS, NONE IS EXPECTED TO FOLLOW HIS LEAD. HIS DEFECTION NONETHELESS GIVES A PSYCHOLOGICAL BOOST TO THE LIBERALS, AND TO THEIR HOPES OF BEING ABLE TO JOIN A COALITION GOVERNMENT AFTER THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION.

6. THEIR EXPECTATIONS IN THIS REGARD RECEIVED AN ADDITIONAL FILLIP FROM THE PUBLICATION YESTERDAY OF AN ORC POLL THAT SHOWED A RISE TO 22 PERCENT IN THEIR SHARE OF SUPPORT AMONG THE ELECTORATE (THEY RECEIVED 19 PERCENT OF THE VOTE AT THE LAST GENERAL ELECTION). THE SAME POLL PUT THE CONSERVATIVES AND LABOR IN A DEAD HEAT WITH 37 PERCENT EACH.

7. OPINION POLLS FLUCTUATE CONSIDERABLY FROM MONTH TO MONTH, OF COURSE, BUT IF SUCH A BREAKDOWN OF VOTES WERE TO MATERIALIZE AT THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION, THE RESULTS WOULD AGAIN DENY ANY PARTY AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY OF SEATS IN THE COMMONS. IN THAT EVENT, POPULAR PRESSURE WOULD BE MUCH STRONGER THAN LAST TIME FOR A COALITION GOVERNMENT, AND SINCE LABOR HAS CATEGORICALLY RULED OUT PARTICIPATION IN ANY COALITION, THE SIGNS WOULD POINT TO A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 LONDON 08661 101757Z

CONSERVATIVE-LIBERAL GOVERNMENT -- SUPPORTED, IF NECESSARY, BY THE NATIONALISTS.

ANNENBERG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL LEADERS, POLITICAL PARTIES, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 JUL 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LONDON08661
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740184-0595
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740762/aaaacasl.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20-Jul-2001 by kellerpr>; APPROVED <20 JUN 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR MP DEFECTS TO LIBERALS
TAGS: PINT, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005